# North Ayrshire to become Europe's largest AI hub with £15 billion investment



North Ayrshire is poised to become a central hub in the UK's burgeoning artificial intelligence landscape, following the announcement that AI Pathfinder—a UK-based company—will invest up to £15 billion in developing a landmark AI industrial park at the i3 site on the outskirts of Irvine. This ambitious project, which will commence operations in 2026, aims to position the region as one of the largest AI infrastructure hubs in Europe, signalling a transformational step for both the local economy and the national AI sector.

AI Pathfinder, a subsidiary of Salamanca, a London-based property development firm led by entrepreneur Martin Bellamy, plans to deploy an initial £385 million investment into a 1GW industrial site featuring up to 6,400 graphics processing units (GPUs). The firm’s broader vision encompasses delivering up to 2GW of sovereign AI supercomputing capacity across the UK, with the first deployment slated for Northamptonshire in late 2025, involving a £3.4 billion project that includes the Dell AI Factory in collaboration with NVIDIA. This facility will focus on supporting complex workloads in sectors such as healthcare and advanced logistics.

The North Ayrshire AI industrial park is designed not only as an advanced technology infrastructure but also as a catalyst for substantial employment. It is expected to generate numerous construction jobs initially and then support a wide range of skilled roles in digital infrastructure, data centre operations, and engineering throughout its ongoing operation. This aligns with local strategies aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth and innovation, including the Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy and the £251 million Ayrshire Growth Deal.

Local government figures have welcomed the announcement enthusiastically. Councillor Tony Gurney, cabinet member for green environment and economy, described the investment as “transformational for our young people and residents,” underscoring the region’s ambition to build an inclusive wellbeing economy based on pioneering Community Wealth Building principles. He highlighted Ayrshire's rising reputation in digital skills and smart manufacturing, pointing to existing initiatives such as the Digital Process Manufacturing Centre in Irvine and the region’s role as a testbed for 5G innovation. Collaborative efforts with the University of the West of Scotland, Ayrshire College, and the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland are already supporting the development of AI and data science capabilities, strengthening Ayrshire’s position at the forefront of technical innovation.

The investment fits into a wider UK government context, where efforts to bolster national AI and supercomputing capabilities are underway. Recent government announcements include a £300 million funding boost aimed at enhancing British supercomputing through new developments at leading universities, intended to make UK AI research resources 30 times more powerful. This broader push complements private sector initiatives like AI Pathfinder’s, collectively seeking to establish the UK as a global leader in AI research and responsible innovation.

AI Pathfinder’s vision for the North Ayrshire site includes future expansion potential to 1.5GW, reflecting long-term confidence in the area’s strategic importance and capacity for growth. As the project progresses, ongoing partnerships between public bodies, educational institutions, and industry participants will be critical to maximising economic, technological, and social benefits for the region.

In sum, this ambitious AI industrial park represents a key milestone on the path to making the UK a leader in AI infrastructure innovation. By leveraging significant private investment alongside regional collaboration and government support, North Ayrshire is set to become a vibrant centre for cutting-edge AI development, delivering substantial economic impact and exciting opportunities for local people.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://news.stv.tv/west-central/ai-industrial-park-in-north-ayrshire-to-bring-15bn-investment-and-substantial-employment> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/news/council-welcome-huge-ai-investment-in-north-ayrshire> - North Ayrshire Council has welcomed a significant AI investment in the region. AI Pathfinder plans to invest £15 billion in West Scotland, starting with an initial investment from 2026 at the i3 site in Irvine. The 1GW site is expected to become one of Europe's largest AI infrastructure hubs, with potential expansion to 1.5GW. This investment is anticipated to create substantial employment opportunities in construction, engineering, digital infrastructure, and data centre operations, aligning with the Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy and the £251 million Ayrshire Growth Deal.
3. <https://www.ashurst.com/en/who-we-are/our-news-work-market-recognition/ashurst-advises-ai-pathfinder-on-uk-sovereign-ai-infrastructure-programme/> - Global law firm Ashurst is advising UK-based technology company AI Pathfinder on its programme to deliver up to 2GW of sovereign AI supercomputing capacity across the UK. AI Pathfinder's first UK deployment is scheduled for December 2025 in Northamptonshire with planned investment of up to £3.4bn. The initial phase includes the Dell AI Factory with NVIDIA, a comprehensive and secure AI solution, able to handle complex workloads across the healthcare and advanced logistics sectors. As part of its long-term vision, AI Pathfinder plans to invest £15bn in West Scotland, beginning with an initial investment from 2026 that will see the start of operations at its North Ayrshire site with significant planned GPU deployment. This 1GW site is expected to scale into one of the largest AI infrastructure hubs in Europe, with the future potential to expand to 1.5GW.
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/technology-secretary-announces-investment-boost-making-british-ai-supercomputing-30-times-more-powerful?trk=public_post_comment-text> - The UK Government has announced a £300 million investment to boost British AI supercomputing capabilities. This includes the development of two new supercomputers: Isambard-AI at the University of Bristol and Dawn at the University of Cambridge. These supercomputers will form the government's 'AI Research Resource', helping researchers develop advanced AI models safely and drive breakthroughs in various fields. The investment aims to make British supercomputing 30 times more powerful, enhancing the UK's position as a global leader in AI research and development.
5. <https://www.thestartupmac.com/news/ai-industrial-park-in-irvine-could-bring-15bn-investment> - Irvine, North Ayrshire, is set to become the site for a new AI industrial park, with a potential investment of up to £15 billion. The project, led by AI Pathfinder—a subsidiary of London-based property developer Salamanca and entrepreneur Martin Bellamy—aims to position the region as a key player in the rapidly growing field of artificial intelligence. The initiative has been met with enthusiasm by the North Ayrshire Council, which describes the project as 'hugely significant' and 'transformational' for the area's economy and employment prospects.
6. <https://news.ssbcrack.com/ai-pathfinder-plans-15bn-ai-industrial-park-in-irvine-scotland/> - AI Pathfinder, a UK-based company, has announced its mission to deliver up to 2GW of sovereign AI supercomputing capacity at its AI Factories in the UK, starting in North Ayrshire. The i3 industrial park in Irvine will initially see an investment of £385 million starting next year. AI Pathfinder's goal is for the site to become one of Europe's prominent AI infrastructure hubs, setting the stage for future investments totaling £15 billion. This project is expected to yield substantial employment opportunities, not just during the construction phase but also in a diverse array of skilled roles necessary for sustainable operation.
7. <https://dailybusinessgroup.co.uk/2025/09/irvine-targeted-for-europes-biggest-ai-project/> - AI Pathfinder is pledging an initial £385 million and a long-term commitment of £15 billion to develop a facility in North Ayrshire. The company, set up two years ago as a subsidiary of Salamanca, a London-based property development company led by entrepreneur Martin Bellamy, aims to create one of the largest AI infrastructure hubs in Europe. The investment is expected to create substantial employment opportunities, both through the delivery of the site's construction and in the range of skilled roles that will support its long-term operation.